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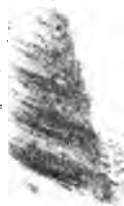
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THE PEDDLER AND HIS GRANDCHILDREN.

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BY
FRANCIS C. WOODWORTH,
EDITOR OF WOODWORTH'S YOUTH'S CABINET.





THE
PEDDLER'S BOY;

OR,

“I’LL BE SOMEBODY.”

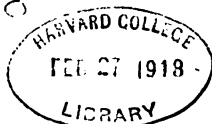
With Colored Illustrations.

BY UNCLE FRANK,
AUTHOR OF “A PEEP AT OUR NEIGHBORS,” “WILLOW LANE STORIES,”
“THE DIVING BELL,” ETC., ETC.

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THE PEDDLER'S BOY.

CHAP. I.

A BIRD'S-EYE GLANCE.

AMONG the many beautiful villages near Boston, there is one quite as beautiful as any, situated but a few miles from that busy metropolis, called—but I must not mention its name; that is of very little consequence. A few rods from the Common, the pride of the Bos-

tonians, is the depot of the railroad which passes through this place ; and one has only to jump into the cars, and in less than fifteen minutes he is there. Uncle Frank has some dear friends in this village, and choice spirits they are, in his estimation. How much this fact has to do with his opinion of the beauty of the place, he does not pretend to say. He has scarcely settled it in his own mind. Nor is it much matter, as the story about to be related will neither lose nor gain much in its interest, by the good or ill opinion which the reader may happen to have of the village itself ;

though I may be pardoned for adding that I should put rather a low value upon the taste of that man, or woman, or child, who could visit this part of the country, when Nature has her best dress on, and not pronounce it one of the most delightful spots, in his or her opinion, that the sun or moon ever shone upon.

Among my friends in this charming village, is one whom, at present, I will call Mr. Bissell—Mr. *Samuel Bissell*. I will call him so for the present, I say. His real name is no more like Bissell than yours is—no more like Samuel Bissell than it is like John Smith or George

Jones; but I think he will forgive us, though, for taking such a liberty with his "good name," should he ever happen to come across this story, and should it prove to him a sort of looking-glass, in which he can see his own features.

When he was a lad, about twelve years old, his father, who had been possessed of a handsome property, failed in business, and as Samuel says, "became as poor as a church mouse." What would have taken place if Samuel's father had been successful in his business affairs, so that it would not have been absolutely necessary for the

lad to work for a living, is more than I can say. Probably it is more than anybody can say. Very likely it would not have been as well for Samuel. It is a good thing for boys and girls to work. Idleness is the cause of a great deal of mischief. I really pity the boy whose father brings him up without giving him a chance to learn some trade or profession. I am always afraid that, in such cases, the lad will learn a trade "on his own hook," and one which will give him trouble, if his father or guardian does not himself see that he gets something better to do.

As I was saying, it is impossible to tell what would have been the history of Samuel Bissell, if, by his father's failure in business, he had not been driven to get a living by his own labor. It is enough for us to know what his history actually was in the circumstances in which he was placed when his father, by a sudden change of fortune, became a poor man.

But I must go back a little in my history. I want you to see and mark well two or three things, which, though little in themselves, are very important. Little things, let me tell you, are not to

be despised, because they are little. A very small stream of water, which you might easily wade across, can set the machinery of a whole factory in motion. Half a dozen marks made with a pen in as many seconds, are sufficient to send weeping and death into every family in an empire. So I must go back a few years in the history of our young friend, and see where he was, what he was, and what sort of a bringing up he had, before the time of his father's unfortunate failure.

CHAP. II.

PEDDLERS AND PEDDLING.

I HAVE more than half a mind to give you a rough sketch of the *Yankee Peddler*.

“But I know all about this race of men already,” perhaps you will say.

Do you? Well, then, consider my sketch as having been made for another reader, and not for you. The fact is—for I want to let you into one of my

little secrets, just here, to start with—the story I am telling is one about a peddler's boy; and I have got a notion that it would be a good plan to devote one chapter, before I have any more to do with the boy himself, to that famous class of men who get their living principally by peddling small wares about the country.

The peddler—the genuine Massachusetts or Connecticut peddler—usually has a wagon built on purpose for his business, so fitted up that it will conveniently hold all the articles he has for sale. One who has ever taken a peep

into a peddler's wagon, will not need to be told that his assortment comprises a great many different articles. Tin ware occupies a large space. In this department may be found tin ovens, sauce pans, milk pans, graters, skimmers, and things of that sort. Then the genuine peddler is always provided with two tin trunks, I believe—trunks which are large enough to hold about half a bushel each. These trunks are stored full of little knick-knacks, "too numerous to mention," as the dealer in dry goods has it in his advertisement.

The peddler does not often drive his

trade in the city. He finds the country the best place for him. So you generally come across him where there are not many stores, and where the houses are not very close together. He stops before the door of a house. I say *he* stops; but I ought rather to have said *his horse*; for the old nag, who, perhaps, has been in his service for a quarter of a century, stops of her own accord at the door of every respectable looking house on the route. She needs no hint from her master in relation to this matter.

Indeed, I once heard of a peddler's

mare, who was so well persuaded that it would be for the interest of her master to stop at the gate of a certain large and neat-looking farm-house, which gate the peddler seemed, for once, disposed to pass by, that she actually stopped in the road, and looked round at the man who had the helm, as if she would say, "My dear sir, there must be some mistake about this matter. Are you crazy? Upon my word, this is one of the strangest things that has ever turned up since we've been driving this peddling business."

We will suppose, now, that the faith-

ful horse, guided by something which, for want of a better name, people generally call *instinct*, but which seems to me a good deal like *reason*, has stopped at the door of a house. The peddler, taking good care to carry along with him the tin trunks before mentioned, leaves the wagon, and goes into the house, the faithful mare, in the meantime, leisurely grazing, if it is summer, and stamping and kicking, just for exercise, in order to keep warm, if it is winter.

“Any tin ware to-day, madam?” the peddler asks. Perhaps madam does want

some tin ware, and perhaps she does not. We will suppose, now, that as far as the department of tin ware is concerned, her wants have been entirely supplied. Then follows a partial enumeration of the contents of the two trunks. Did you ever hear a peddler rattle over the names of these small wares? He does it as rapidly, almost, as a bobolink goes through the different notes of his song: "Any pins, needles, sewing silk, twist, buttons, tape, jew's harps, hooks and eyes, scissors, penknives, pocket books, handkerchiefs, breast pins, ear rings" — and so he runs on, hardly waiting for

the good lady, who is looking over the articles by this time, to put in a word edgewise.

Peddlers, as a class, are set down as pretty wide awake in driving a bargain. They have been slandered, I doubt not. A great deal of unfairness and dishonesty have been charged to them, of which they never were guilty. Still, I think they are apt to be pretty shrewd and keen, when they are trading. Sometimes, no doubt, though not always, they are *too* shrewd and keen to be strictly honest; for there is a point where shrewdness and keenness ought to stop.

When I was a little boy, I lived in Connecticut. My home was in the very bosom of the country. It was not often that anybody from the busy world came there; and when one did come, he was sure to make something of a stir, especially among us little folks. The advent of a tin peddler's wagon, I recollect, I hailed as a most remarkable event. It always seemed to me that a peddler's head was as full of knowledge as it could well hold. Such a budget of news as he always opened! Such smart things as those which came from his mouth! Such wonderful good nature

as he showed towards the children. Why I don't remember that I ever heard a peddler speak cross to a boy, though we used always to tumble over the nameless "notions" in his trunks to our hearts' content, all the time he stayed in the house. I hardly know which interested me more, the driving up to our door of a peddler's wagon, or the entrance into our kitchen of half a dozen Mohegan Indians, with their squaws and pappooses.

The age of clock peddlers had not come then. Wooden clocks are plenty as backberries now; and you can buy

one for a song, almost. But Connecticut clocks were quite unknown in my childhood. Now, I suppose, the peddlers sell more clocks than tin ovens and sauce pans. But the peddler of clocks and the peddler of tin ware is, in all important particulars, one and the same.

Did you ever hear of the peddler who sold a load of clocks that would only keep in order twenty-four hours, and hardly that? It seems that his clocks were, like Peter Pindar's razors, *made to sell*, and not to run. Well, he went a good way off from home, before he offered any of his wares for sale. He found

no trouble in selling the clocks, for they were wonderfully cheap ; and besides, as he took good care to inform all his customers, each clock was warranted, and on his way homeward he would call at every house where he sold a clock, when he should take pleasure in exchanging all the clocks that did not perform well. Now it turned out that his clocks were not worth a farthing. He sold out the whole load, though—every clock but one. Then he turned about, and commenced his journey homeward, calling upon all his customers, as he had agreed to do.

“Well, how did that *are* clock run neighbor?”

“Run! it didn’t run at all. It stopped as still as a gate post before you had got up Pudding Hill!”

“Did it though, *rally*?”

“To be sure it did. What on earth did you sell me such a clock for?”

“Well, now, you needn’t take on in that style. I’ll give you another clock. I told you I would, when I sold it to you.”

So the cunning peddler gives his customer the only clock he has left, and takes the one he sold him at first, in

place of it. And that is the way the fellow managed all the way home.

There are a great many stories told about peddlers, which, I presume, are not true, and it is sometimes rather difficult to sift the genuine stuff from the chaff. I really don't know how much to believe of the anecdotes of Connecticut peddlers of former times. It is a matter of history, that they sold wooden nutmegs, and horn gun flints, and white-wood cucumber seeds, and white oak hams. But I should not wonder if these stories were made out of whole cloth. The truth is, there have been, first and

last, a great many false charges made against "the land of steady habits."

It is a common notion that peddlers are very apt to make dupes of the ladies. Perhaps they are. But I know of one instance in which a peddler got nicely come up with by a lady. I don't believe any man could have done it better. The story is this. A peddler, with a wagon load of tin ware, drove up to the door of a house around which quite a number of children were playing. The mistress of the house made her appearance, and was urged to trade. She had no money, she said. That was no mat-

ter, the peddler replied. He would take anything in pay—rags, old clothes, worn out tin, anything. But she hadn't got *anything*.

“Well,” the peddler continued, “I'll take one of your children.”

The lady thought a moment. “Very good,” said she, “you may have that ragged boy yonder for ten dollars, and I'll take the value of him in tin.”

The bargain was struck.

The lady selected the tin ware, and it was carried into the house. The peddler mounted his seat, with the ragged urchin by his side. and threatened to

drive off. "Of course," he thought, "she will not let me go away with the boy. She will pay me the money, when she sees that I am *rally* going." He was mistaken, though. He had reckoned without his host, this time.

Crack went the whip. "I'm going now," said he. "I'm off in less than no time."

"Very well," said the good woman; "so I supposed."

He actually started, and went a few rods, slowly, when he stopped, turned around, and said, "There, now I'm off for *sartain*."

“So I heard you say some time ago,” said the lady.

“But are you willing I should take off this *'ere* boy?”

“Certainly,” said the lady. “We keep the *town's poor* here, and this is the worst fellow in the lot.”

The story is that the peddler, when he found how completely he was outwitted, gave, in money, about as much as the tin he had parted with was worth, to get out of the scrape, or in other words, to get clear of his young pauper.

CHAP. III.

THE OTHER SIDE.

IF I should stop here, in my sketch of the New England peddler, I am not sure but I should give a false view of that class of people, and I should be sorry to do that. I must throw some *lights* into the picture, in order to make it more perfect and truthful.

I have said before, that the peddler has been charged with a great many sins

which probably he never dreamed of, and certainly never committed. But a great deal more than this is true of that large class who make their living by selling merchandise from house to house. There are hosts of men engaged in this business, who are strictly honest and fair in all their dealings. They never cheat any one. They have no disposition to cheat, any more than the merchant who sells his goods in his own store. Besides, the business, though a great deal has been done to make it *seem* anything but respectable, is well enough, in itself. There is nothing dis-

graceful about it. It is, or may be, an honest calling; and it is one of Uncle Frank's doctrines that any business that is lawful, and honest, and does nobody any harm, ought to be considered respectable. Why not? Why ought not the boy, even, who brushes my boots, if he knows as much, and his character is as good, why ought he not to be respected as much as the one who sets the types for my daily newspaper? I can't see why, and it would puzzle anybody to see why, I guess.

I know of peddlers, good men and true, who would as soon part with one

of their fingers as to cheat any of their customers. They want to make good bargains, when they sell anything. Of course they do. But they want only that. They would not take advantage of a person's ignorance of the price of an article, and sell him or her that article for ten times as much as it is worth, just because they *can* do it.

CHAP. IV.

DEACON BISSELL.

DEACON BISSELL—Deacon Abijah Bissell, was a peddler of this sort. I should not wonder if some of my readers had heard of the deacon. He is in heaven now, I doubt not. But his fame, which, while he was living, had spread over quite a large section of country in the commonwealth of Massachusetts, is not dead yet. I dare say scores and scores

of housewives are now on the stage, within a good deal less than a hundred miles of Boston, who could show you milk pans still on duty in their cheese room, which came from Deacon Bissell's wagon.

Deacon Abijah Bissell—*Buysell* a great many people had it—occupied a snug little house, with ever so many flowers in the door yard, and ever so many tufts of moss on its old shingles. He did not spend more than half his time at home. The rest was devoted to peddling. No wandering Arab ever moved oftener from place to place than

Deacon Bissell. Still he had his orbit, and he traveled in it as regularly as the moon, and Jupiter, and our own planet, travel in their orbits. Every family he visited knew almost the exact day of his arrival. The deacon had a great deal of method in everything he did. He was one of the most punctual and precise men you ever met. An anecdote at this moment occurs to me, which goes to show what a value he placed upon punctuality.

Patty Bissell, his eldest daughter, was to ride over to Boston with the old gentleman. She had been wanting to go to

the city for a long time, and she was delighted when her father invited her to go.

“Patty, how long will it take you to get ready?” asked the deacon.

“Half an hour,” the girl replied.

“Well, say an hour,” said the deacon. “But don’t fail to be ready at the moment. I want you to learn to be punctual, my dear.”

“Oh, I shall be ready in an hour, father, and in less time, too.”

“Very well.”

The hour passed. The deacon was in his wagon, ready to start. “Well,

Patty," he shouted, so that his daughter could hear him in the room where she was busy putting herself in a trim for the city. She was not quite ready. I think she had forgotten where her gloves were, and was ransacking every drawer in her bureau for them. The deacon spoke again.

"In one minute," said Patty.

The deacon waited one minute more, a very long minute, according to his watch—and off he started for Boston.

Poor Patty! The disappointment was a sore one for her. But it taught her a lesson in punctuality which was worth

more to her than a quarter's schooling at the Roundhill Academy.

Mr. Bissell, you will please to take notice, was a *real* deacon. In the country, it is a very common thing, I presume you are aware, for almost all the folks to have some handle or another fixed to their names ; and very often the handle is put on, nobody knows how, or why, or when, or where. One man is known as a military officer, a *captain*, perhaps, or a *general*. But when you come to inquire into his history, you find that he never rose to a higher rank than that of a corporal in the militia, and

possibly not quite so high as that. Another man is a *squire*. But how he came to be one, and, indeed, what is meant by the title in his case, are questions which would puzzle the wisest heads in the neighborhood. There are, also, in almost every part of the country, sundry men whom everybody calls *uncle*. Each one of them is *everybody's* uncle in general, and nobody's uncle in particular. *Deacons*, too, scores of them, may be found, who have no other claim to the title than this—that they are *called* so, by nearly all the men, women and children in the parish.

But Mr. Bissell, as I said before, was a *real* deacon. The title had been given to him by the little church in his native parish. And he was a good man, too, Some people make up their religion into a sort of a cloak, which they regard as too nice for every day use. They put it on and wear it every Sunday, and take it off every Monday morning, and keep it off until Saturday night. You never get a sight of their religion, when they are about their business. They wear long faces, to be sure. But a face as long as a broom handle is not worth much to Uncle Frank, as a sign of a

man's piety. People may say what they will about religion—and in this country, especially, where everybody can think for himself, and very few get other folks to think for them, there must be a great many different notions as to what religion is—but people may say what they will about it, I think more of *actions* than I do of *words*. I don't care if a man's creed reaches as far as from the Battery to Grace Church. If he is not fair in his dealings, and a good neighbor, in every respect, I don't think much of his religion.

The piety of Deacon Bissell did not

all fly off in words, as a glass of soda water flies off in foam. He was a good man on Saturdays and Mondays, as well as on Sundays, at home as well as at church, in his worldly business as well as out of it.

Deacon Bissell had a brother, who did a large business in Boston, and was supposed to be very rich. Rich people, however, sometimes get a little cramped in their business, and find it hard to get along. Deacon Bissell's brother happened, at one time, to need some thousands of dollars more than he had at command. He knew that the deacon

had saved quite a snug sum from the profits of his small trading, and so he went to him, and asked him if he would put his name to a note of some ten or twelve thousand dollars. The deacon had never done anything of the kind before. But supposing his brother would be able to pay the note when it was due, and always being anxious to oblige everybody, when he could, he put his name to the note.

That note ruined Deacon Bissell. His brother could not pay it. He failed, and his failure swept away nearly every dollar which the deacon had been laying

up for thirty years. This loss tried him very much. He wept over it—not because he needed or wanted the lost money for himself, but because, as he used to remark, it was one of his darling schemes to give all his children “a good setting out” in the world. It seemed a terrible loss to him. “If I were a young man,” said he, “I might hope to get up again. But I am old. I am almost worn out. A few more years, I am afraid, will finish what there is left of me.”

CHAP. V.

THE YOUNGEST BOY.

THE deacon had several children. At the time of his failure two or three were married, and of those that still remained at home, Samuel was the youngest. It is natural enough for you to suppose that this Samuel, as I am giving you such a long story about him, was a remarkable child, a sort of prodigy. But such is not the fact, I believe. As to his cradle

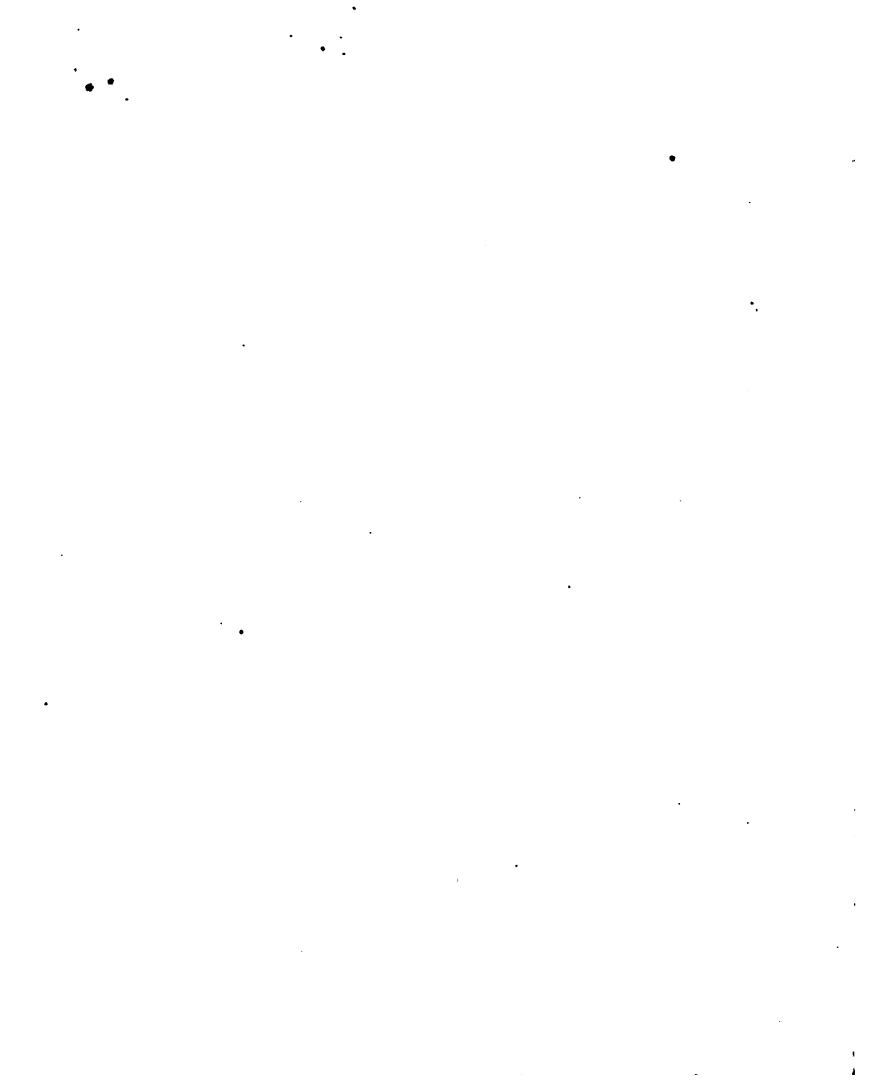
life, I profess not to know much. I have not much doubt, however, that he was very like other infants—that he had his share of little troubles, and cried rustily over them; that he laughed, and frolicked, and clapped his hands, like most babies; that he went into raptures over a tin whistle and a rattle box; and that, in short, he was as wise as most people are, at that interesting age when the nursery seems to them to comprise the greater portion of the habitable globe.

One of the first anecdotes I ever heard about Samuel—one which, though it does not make him out a prodigy, shows

pretty clearly what sort of stuff he was made of, as straws show which way the wind blows—is something like this: When Samuel was quite a small boy, and before he had made much progress in his studies at school, there came to board at his father's, for a few weeks, the teacher of the district school. This man was fond of children, and took quite a fancy to little Samuel. "Samuel," said he, one night, when the boy was playing with a new ball, "did you know the world was round, like your ball?" "No, he had never dreamed of such a thing, he said. He had thought it was



SAMUEL AND THE SCHOOLMASTER.



as flat as a pancake. "Well, it is round," the teacher said, "almost as round as a ball or a marble." The little fellow was so much interested in what the good man told him, that he left his play, and said he wanted to hear all about the world. So the teacher had to get his globe, and talk to him about it, until he was hoarse.

I have heard another anecdote about the lad. There was a company of some half a dozen boys and girls at the deacon's one day, and they were all as busy as they could be. Shall I tell you what they were busy about? They were at

play. They were playing with all their might. Among their plays were "blind man's buff," "tag," "puss, puss in the corner," "hide and seek," "who's got the button?" and I don't know how many other plays, which almost every child is familiar with.

While they were busy chasing each other round the yard, all of them as merry as the birds that were having a concert on the branches, over their heads, a wagon drove up, and Captain Lovechild got out of it, and went into the house. This gentleman lived in Boston. He was quite a rich man, hav-

ing made a great deal of money by going to sea. The captain was a relative of Deacon Bissell, and often came to see him and his family, taking good care, generally, in his visits, to bring something with him to please the little folks.

It was almost sunset when the children were called into the house. Supper was nearly ready, and a very nice supper it was to be, for Mrs. Bissell always took great pains to make the children happy when they visited at her house.

Captain Lovechild, as usual, was glad

to see the children, and the children were quite as glad to see him. They all liked him. Why they liked him, I suppose, not having thought on that subject much, they would hardly have been able to tell. But I mistrust—I give it as a sort of a *guess*—that the nice things he was so sure to have ready for them, when he met them, had a little to do with their affection. I remember—if you will allow Uncle Frank to travel out of his road a few paces—I remember a lesson which was once beaten into my head by my little niece. I was going away from home—to Boston, perhaps.

when I called the little girl to me, and said,

“Well, Mary, I’m going away, to be gone, a long, long time.”

“O, don’t go, uncle,” she said; “I don’t want you to go away.”

“But I must go, dear.”

“I shall cry if you do.”

“Not a great deal, I guess.”

“O, yes, I shall; I shall feel very bad.”

“Well, Mary, I can’t stay at home; I shall have to go to Boston; and I presume you will feel sorry to have me go; but suppose I should bring you some-

thing nice when I come back—a little rabbit, or something of the kind ?”

“O, then you may go, uncle,” said Mary, clapping her hands, as a certain lord of the barn yard does his wings, just before crowing, and dancing up and down, as if she saw the little white rabbit, with his long ears and red eyes, actually munching his clover and bean pods on the carpet.

Ha ! ha ! ha ! The lesson Uncle Frank learned then was, that the love of children sometimes lies on the surface of the heart, and does not reach quite to the bottom of it. However, I suppose

the same is true of grown people, too, sometimes, though they are usually more careful as to what they say, so that they do not let the cat out of the bag.

But I shall be taken up as a *vagrant*, if I go wandering about in this style.

CHAP. VI.

A NOBLE RESOLUTION.

As I said, the children all liked the good old gentleman, for some reason or other. Now I think of it, I guess the reason of their liking him might have been hid away in some sly place, as was the reason of Mr. Somebody for *not* liking Doctor Fell. This Mr. Somebody used to say, as you probably have heard,

“I do not like you, Doctor Fell,
The reason why I cannot tell.”

If the children had put their thoughts into rhyme, as Mr. Somebody did, when he gave vent to his feelings in the Doctor Fell affair, no doubt they would have said this, or something like it :

“ I love you, sir, I love you well ;
The reason why I cannot tell.”

When supper was over that evening at Deacon Bissell's, the sun had been down some time. The stars were beginning to peep out of their hiding places, and the moon, who had shown her face a little before the sun took his leave, had now grown bolder, and shone out brightly

and clearly, as if she were not afraid of anybody, and as if she had some sort of a notion that she had got to be mistress.

“Well, children,” said Captain Love-child, “what are you going to drive at next?”

Mrs. Bissell remarked that she thought it was almost time for them to drive towards home, but said that she guessed the captain had something to show them, and that they might stay just half an hour longer.

Of course all the boys and girls flocked around the captain; and, sure enough, he went into another room, and showed

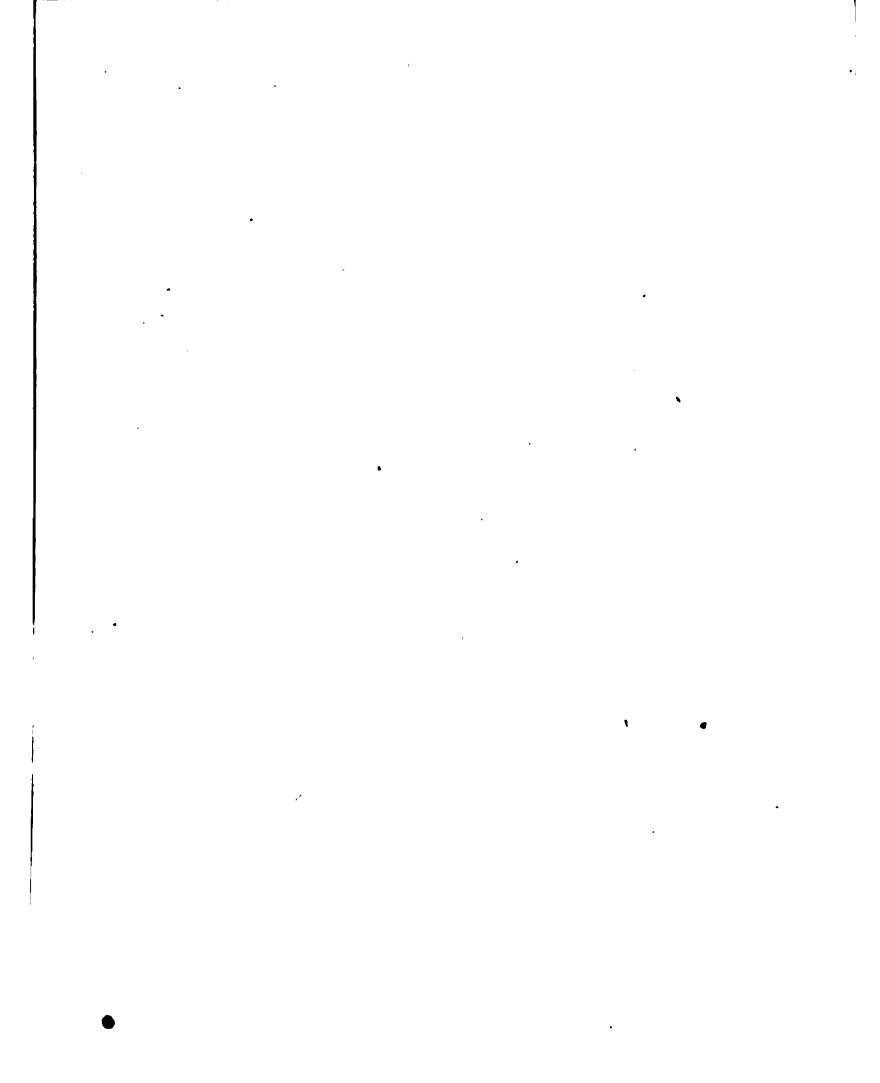
them one of the most curious looking instruments, they all thought, that they had ever seen in their lives.

“Oh, what is that, Captain Lovechild, and what is it for ?” So the children all asked, in nearly the same breath.

I suppose, indeed, I hope, that you are so much interested in my story, that you have already had the same questions pass through your mind ; and I will answer your questions as the captain answered those of his little friends. The instrument which the kind old gentleman had brought with him all the way from Boston, on purpose to please and

instruct these children, was called a *telescope*. A telescope is a long, hollow cylinder, with glasses in it. It is so made that when you look through it, at anything a great way off, like the moon and the stars, they appear a great deal larger. It seems to bring them near to you. You can see them much more distinctly, and as you look at them, you can find out many wonderful things about them.

As soon as the captain had got the instrument in order, he took it out into the yard, and pointed one end of the long tube towards the moon.





LOOKING THROUGH THE TELESCOPE.

“Now, then,” said he, “just take a peep at the moon. You’ll see something up there, which will make you wonder, or I’m very much mistaken. One at a time.”

And the children, who did not need to be urged much, gathered around the lower end of the telescope, first one, and then another, until they had all got a peep at the wonderful things in the moon. I can’t tell you how much they were delighted. It would fill a small volume, if I should set down all their “ohs,” and their “ahs,” and everything else which came rattling out of their

mouths, while they were looking through the telescope. But I will tell you what Samuel Bissell said, though. I will tell you one thing he said, at all events. After he had looked through the instrument, and had listened to what the old gentleman said about the moon, and the planets, and the fixed stars, "I declare," said he, "I don't know anything. *I'll be somebody*, I'll know something and do something, if I live."

Samuel, as you will perceive, had his little head so full of the wonders of the heavens, and had such a strong desire to add to his stock of knowledge, that he

used pretty bold language. He did not say, "I'll *try* to be somebody," as he might have said, if he had studied his speech a little. His head was full, so that his words burst out from his mouth as the water would burst out of a hole in the dam. Yes, and his *heart* spoke, too, as well as his *head*. More sincere and honest words never dropped from his lips.

A new light dawned on that youth's mind, that evening. From the moment that he uttered the resolution that he would "be somebody," he labored to gather a large harvest of knowledge ; to

be something more than a mere cipher in the world ; to act his part well.

“And did he succeed?” you are ready to ask. I should have to get ahead of my story to answer the question. But one thing I will say here : that if a boy makes up his mind, deliberately and firmly, that he will climb up to some high point on the hill of science, and that he will be respected and honored among his fellows—if he brings his hands, and his head, and his heart to the task, and goes ahead, through thick and thin, not turning out of his path, however he may be tempted to do so, he is

almost sure to succeed in reaching what he aims at; that is, if his life is spared and his health does not give out. I have great faith in a strong will, a clear head, right principles, a good stock of patience, and a steady disposition to go ahead. Some boys, when you talk to them about doing something and being something, always throw a bucket of cold water over you by saying, "There are so many difficulties," or, "If I were only in such a boy's place!" Well, you may always be sure that such cowards will never do anything or be anything worth mentioning; for it is not very

common for people to accomplish much by *accident*, and these little chaps, should they ever succeed at all, would have to blunder into their success.

After hearing this anecdote of Samuel, you will not wonder that, some years after this resolution was made, when he heard of his father's loss, he played the part of a hero. I will tell you about that in another chapter.





"WHAT WILL BECOME OF YOU?"

CHAP. VII.

A TALK ABOUT THE FUTURE.

“SAMUEL,” said his father, a few days after he learned that he was a bankrupt, “I don’t know what is to become of you. I’ve lost all the property I had. I’m not worth a red cent.”

“I guess I can take care of myself, father,” said the lad. “Don’t worry about that.”

“Why, what can you do, Samuel?”

“Not much of anything now, I suppose—anything which will put dollars and cents into my pocket—but I can learn, if I can get a chance.”

“And what would you like to do for a living?”

“There are a good many things which I would like to do,” said Samuel, “and may be I shall do them some day; but I’ve been thinking that just now, I had better go to work in the factory.”

“What! in the cotton factory?”

“Yes, sir, Mr. Mason’s.”

“But would you like that kind of work?”

“I don’t know, sir, I’m sure ; I should like to try, at any rate. I should like to do something.”

He did try. That very week, Samuel got a place in Mr. Mason’s factory. His wages were not great, at first. But he earned more than enough to pay for his board at once, and in a month or two he did much better than that. Samuel had to work hard, though. The factory bell rang at day-break, and he was obliged to get up and work an hour or more before breakfast. All day long, from early morning till evening, and in the winter season, till nine o’clock at night, he was

required to be at work, with the exception of the time—and that was rather brief—allotted to meals. It was a very rare thing that the boys in the factory had a holiday. Sunday, to be sure—they had that to themselves. But most of the boys, it is to be hoped, were too well brought up and too conscientious to devote any part of that day to play and amusement.

Once in a great while, however, “like angels’ visits, few and far between,” came a holiday. They have a great time, you know, in every part of the good old commonwealth of Massachu-

setts, when the day of the annual thanksgiving comes. Very few people, old or young, think of doing much business on that day.



CHAP. VIII.

THANKSGIVING AND TEMPTATION.

WELL, in process of time, that long looked for festival arrived. No boy in Meadville had to sleep with an eye open that morning, for fear he would not hear the first accent of the tongue of the factory bell. The bell slept; and the boys slept, too, until they were called to breakfast.

Samuel had not become very intimate

with many of the factory boys. Indeed, among them all, there was only one that he cared a great deal about associating with ; and this one he loved as a brother. The name of this boy—or rather, the name by which I prefer to call him in this narrative—was Frederick Noble. Frederick and Samuel, when they were not in the factory, were half their time together. I hardly know what made them so much attached to each other ; though probably one reason was that the circumstances of the two were somewhat similar. Frederick's father, as well as Samuel's, had once been a man of pro-

perty, but, like Mr. Bissell, had become comparatively poor. There's no accounting for likes and dislikes, though. Samuel and Frederick were fond of each other, and I presume it would have puzzled either of them to tell the reason for this fondness.

These two boys, according to an arrangement which had been made a long time beforehand, were companions on thanksgiving day. If I remember aright, the governor's proclamation for thanksgiving, at the time when Frederick and Samuel were boys together, used to have these words tacked to the last end of it:

“All servile labor and vain recreation on said day are by law forbidden.” Still, parents and guardians allowed considerable latitude to the children in their amusements, if the governor did not. It was pretty generally understood that the young folks were to have a good time of it, on thanksgiving day.

It very often happens, that when we enjoy ourselves most—when we come nearest to being perfectly happy—we encounter the strongest temptations, or, what amounts to the same thing, we are induced to yield to temptation.

Several times during the day, these

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two boys came very near doing something which they would have been ashamed of and heartily sorry for afterwards. They met some boys playing cards for small sums of money, and were urged to "try their luck." At first, they thought they would, just for fun." But they finally concluded that fun of that sort was rather too dangerous—that it would cost more than it would come to—and so they passed on.

About a hundred rods from the village, in an orchard, our two friends came across a company of larger boys, who were playing ball. Here they encoun-

tered another temptation. The ball-players were treating themselves to a kind of liquor, which, in those parts, bore the name of *egg-nog*. Some of the boys and girls who read this story, or hear it read, will no doubt laugh at this unmusical and out-of-the-way name; and I confess the word looked to me so strange and barbarous, after I had written it down, that I had a great mind to dash my pen across it, and hunt up some other name for it. However, I concluded I would go straight to Webster's large dictionary, and see whether he had taken notice of the word. I

made up my mind that, if I found it in the dictionary, I would hold on to it, and that if it were missing there, I would let it stay in the society where it was born, christened and brought up. I went to the dictionary, and there I found the word, looking, for all the world, as if it were vastly at home.

“Egg-nog,” says Doctor Webster, “a drink used in America, consisting of the yolks of eggs beaten up with sugar, and the whites of eggs whipped, with the addition of wine or spirits.” The addition which Webster speaks of, and which consisted of *spirits* when I was

a boy, and not of *wine*, you will please to take notice, was considered a very important addition, without which the liquor would be worthless.

Well, Samuel and Frederick, though they were strongly urged to "taste of the nice egg-nog," and though they almost wished that they might so far gratify their curiosity as to taste of it, succeeded in resisting the temptation, and letting the stuff alone. Neither of them drank a drop of it ; though I should not wonder if they found it rather hard work to refuse.

My young friend, perhaps you think

these facts are hardly worth noticing. But I look upon them in a very different light. These boys, in my opinion, gained great victories that day—victories quite as worthy of praise and honor as those of Alexander and Cæsar. They had the courage to *do right*, when they were tempted to *do wrong*. They did right. And they had their reward, no doubt, when they heard the voice of conscience in their own bosoms, whispering, “Well done.”

CHAP. IX.

PATRIOTISM AND POWDER.

It was more than six months after the thanksgiving festival, before the factory boys had another holiday. Time, who never stands still a moment, went on, and by and by, the Fourth of July came round. Samuel and Frederick were companions on that day, as well as on the preceding thanksgiving festival. The first thing they did, after they got up in

the morning—for they were wakened very early by the ringing of all the bells in Meadville, not excepting the one on the factory, which was keyed on a very high note, and was cracked in the bargain, though it made up in zeal and earnestness what it lacked in depth and sweetness—the first thing they did was to climb the hill that overlooked the village, where the men were firing a salute in honor of the day. There seems to be something in the smell of gunpowder, and the sound of a huge-mouthed cannon, which wakes up a good deal of patriot feeling in the breast of a child.

How my little heart, when it was not much bigger than a chipping squirrel's, used to throb with patriotism—or something else, for I am not so sure that it was patriotism, after all—while I heard the rusty old cannon that did duty at Willow Lane, booming out its sentiments about matters and things in general, and the declaration of American independence in particular. As long ago as I can remember, I know the sound of a drum almost overturned the little sense I had. Oh, what a quantity of martial spirit was set in motion in my brain, when, as it sometimes happened, I got a

chance to beat on that drum myself—to beat on it with both hands, “like a trainer.” It was one of the proudest achievements of my childhood, I do believe—that performance on the drum—the real drum, the identical one which the “trainers” used.

It is not quite so with me, now-a-days. You may wonder why. I almost wonder why myself. But so it is. The deafening roar of cannon, the racket of a thousand muskets, the clatter of junior drums, and the thunder of senior ones, have not *such* a moving effect on me as they used to have. They *move me out*





THE YOUNG DRUMMER.

of the way now. That is about all. I suppose, if the truth was known, I dislike *war* more than I did when I was a child. War seems a terrible thing to me, whenever I think of it. I cannot bear the thought that hostile men should meet each other on the field of battle, and use all the art they are masters of, in trying to kill each other.

But enough of this. Children, as I was saying, love to hear the noise of the cannon. It stirs up the embers of their patriotism, or fills them with some other kind of fire. We will not stop now to inquire very particularly as to the nature

of the blaze. Our two friends felt as if there was a young Vesuvius burning in their bosoms, as they listened to the sound of the cannon. Frederick especially, was quite beside himself. War had completely turned his head. Oh, how he longed to be a soldier. I am not sure but he almost wished some nation or other would pick a quarrel with us, so that he might have a chance to shoulder his musket, and start right off, and fight the battles of his country. Like a great many other children, he saw only one side of war, and that was its bright side. He heard no groans

from dying men, no whizzing of cannon balls past his ears. He saw no river of blood flowing from human veins. He had lost no limb of his own; he was in danger of losing none. I hardly think he had read the poetical confessions of a young hero just returned from the wars. Did you ever read them, my friend? They are worth reading, and I will quote them for you :

“My father was a farmer good,
With corn and beef in plenty.
I mowed, and hoed, and held the plow
And longed for one and twenty;
For I had quite a martial turn,
And scorned the lowing cattle ;

I burned to wear a uniform,
Hear drums, and see a battle.

“My birth-day came ; my father urged,
But stoutly I resisted ;
My sister wept, my mother prayed,
But off I went, and 'listed.
They marched me on through wet and dry,
To tunes more loud than charming,
But lugging knapsack, box and gun,
Was harder work than farming.

“We met the foe—the cannons roared—
The crimson tide was flowing—
The frightful death-groans filled my ears—
I wished that I was mowing.
I lost my leg—the foe came on—
They had me in their clutches—
I starved in prison till the peace,
Then hobbled home on crutches.”

This young hero gives the other and darker side of war, you see. There is reality in what the poor fellow says, if he does tell his story in rather a humorous vein. I tell you what it is, little friend, there is nothing good in war. It is a terrible thing; and though I don't pretend to say that it is never necessary, I consider it one of the worst curses with which a nation is ever visited—worse than pestilence, worse than famine. That is the reason why I do not quite like to see boys so fond of war, and so full of the war spirit.

But we must proceed with the story.

CHAP. X.

THE GLASS OF GIN.

Soon after breakfast was over that morning, Samuel and his companion strolled out into the village. None but those who are kept constantly at work in a close room, almost every day in the year, except Sunday, can imagine with what light hearts these two boys walked the streets of that factory village, on the morning of that memorable holiday. I

say memorable. It proved to be a day which neither of these boys could well forget.

As they passed along through the village in the course of the forenoon, they saw a great many sights, which to their young eyes, were worth going a great way to see. There were tents erected on the square in front of the meeting house—tents in which there were scores of eatable and drinkable things to sell. In one of these tents, there was a boy, who seemed very much at home, dealing out candies, and filberts, and raisins, and gingerbread, and liquors of different

kinds. There were a dozen different bottles and decanters in his tent, each with some sort of liquor in it.

“Hurrah!” said he, as soon as the two friends came up to the tent; “why, Fred, is that you?” And he wrung Frederick’s hand much as a farmer is accustomed to wring the necks of fat chickens, a day or two before Christmas or Thanksgiving.

It turned out that the youth who was so glad to see Frederick, was Peter Pip-pin, a son of the butcher in the place where Frederick’s father lived. Peter was a rude, untutored boy, rough as a

nutmeg grater, or a chestnut bur. He and Frederick had been to school together; and though they had never been very intimate, because their tastes were so different, they had been sufficiently acquainted to be really glad to see each other again, after a separation of more than a year.

“Bless me!” said Peter—*Pete* he was always called at school, but we will give him all that belongs to him, for that is nothing to boast of—“bless me! how you have grown, Fred. ’Pon my soul, I’m glad to see you. Come, take something to drink. What’ll you have? and

that chap there with you, what'll you have, my beauty?"

This coarse language grated a good deal on Samuel's ears, and it was by no means pleasant to Frederick; but it did not affect both boys in exactly the same way. The former was so much disgusted, that, after thanking the butcher's boy for his invitation, he was hurrying away as fast as possible. The latter, while he did not care a straw for the liquor, felt kindly towards his former schoolfellow, and was rather disposed to gratify him by at least going through the ceremony of drinking.

Frederick is on dangerous ground now. But he had been on dangerous ground before, you recollect. He got off the rocks then. Let us hope he will now. But Freddy, you must look out. As the sailor says, when he is looking out at the mast head, and when he sees the vessel is driving rapidly towards the surf, "breakers ahead!" There is temptation here. To be sure, it is not so strong, but he can overcome it. How easily he resisted a similar temptation on Thanksgiving day. The result of that day's adventures shows that he can get along safely enough, if he will only

look out for himself. But *will* he look out for himself? We shall see.

“Hadn’t we better walk along, Fred?” asked Samuel, in a kind and pleasant tone of voice.

“Not quite yet, if you please,” said Frederick.

“Come, say what you’ll have, Fred! Take a pull at this ’ere old Jamaky? The real critter, Fred, the real critter—none of your Boston pisin stuff. Or what do you say to a double and twisted horn of brandy what’s jist come from France?”

Fred hesitated. Strange enough that

he should hesitate. Was he charmed, as a bird is said to be charmed by a black snake, so that he could not move?

“It is time to be off, Fred. Take my advice, and come along,” said Samuel.

“You little chicken-hearted baby!” Peter broke in, “hold your tongue, if you don’t want it pulled out by the roots.”

“Wait half a minute,” said Frederick to his companion. “Peter, pray don’t talk so to Samuel. He is one of the best fellows that ever lived.”

“Well, he ain’t worth minding, any how. Come, now, are you going to

drink or not? Take some punch! That's the stuff. There ain't no spiiit in it hardly. Or may be you'll have some gin."

And the butcher's boy poured out a glass half full of gin and water, and passed it to Frederick, while he took good care to prepare another glass for himself. Peter drank. *So did Frederick*—not because he loved the liquor, but because he was good-natured. He did it to oblige his former school-fellow. I said he did it because he was good-natured. I ought rather to have said, perhaps, that it was because he had not

courage enough to do right. I am not sure but that is a more correct reason than the other.

Poor Frederick! From the moment he drank that glass of gin, he felt unhappy. All day long he thought of what he had done, and it robbed him of all his peace.

“But never mind, Fred,” said his companion, “you are sorry you did it, and you will never drink any more. Let that comfort you.”

I will drop the thread of Frederick's history here, for the present. Perhaps I may take it up again, though, by and by.

The reason I have given any sketch at all of this boy's adventures, I frankly confess it, is that by comparing him with Samuel, and noticing where he stumbled, and how he stumbled, you might learn exactly what those traits of character were by which the latter was able to get over the difficulties he met with, and to resist the temptations that surrounded him.

CHAP. XI.

LIFE IN A FACTORY.

HAVE you ever been inside of a cotton factory, reader? If so, you need not be told what sort of a place it is. I remember very well how I felt the first time I went into a spinning room. What a whirl of little wheels and great wheels, of bobbins and spindles, of drums and cylinders, there was in that room. My brain seemed to go round with the

wheels; and I could hardly help holding my head with both hands, to keep it in its place. What a clatter was kept up by some of the machinery. What a dull, droning, hum-drum sound there was, besides. I could not hear the sound of my own voice, there was such a racket; and such a dense fog settled upon my mind, on account of the noise, that I could scarcely tell whether I was in the body or out of the body. Of all the places in the world, that ever I had seen or heard of, or ever expected to see or hear of, I firmly believed that the worst place for a boy to live, day after

day, was in the spinning room of a cotton factory. I had heard of dismal dungeons, in which the light of day never shone ; and I had thought that they were bad enough. But this factory seemed a great deal worse than any dungeon that was ever invented. The factory would drive me crazy in a week. I was sure of that. In the dungeon, on the other hand, which, though it might be as dark as tar, was still and quiet, I fancied I could at least keep my senses.

A factory is a busy place, too. It is one of the last situations in the world

where a lazy person would wish to be employed. You can't be lazy there, if you try. A horse might as well undertake to be lazy in a treadmill. Some people think that factory boys and factory girls have to work *too* hard; that they are confined too many hours a day, and that they don't get fresh air enough. As to that, I shall not set myself up for a judge. Very likely the children fare better in some factories than they do in others. I will say, though, that the task of a factory boy, were the factory ever so well managed, would not be so pleasant to me as many others. I will say

this; and I ought to say, besides, that when a boy gets *used* to the noise of a factory, he does not mind it much. Though it almost deafens him at first, he almost forgets there is any noise after a while.

Our young friend, the peddler's boy, made up his mind, the first day he went to work in Mr. Mason's factory, that he *would* like the business, whether or no. Well, he did like it, after a week or two—that is, he was content with it, and he was as cheerful and happy in the factory as he had been out of it. Contentment, my dear young friends, is a

gem. It is worth more than gold or diamonds. You can't buy it with gold or diamonds, and if you should ever happen to get hold of it, you would be foolish to part with it for all the gold in California and all the pearls in the tower of London. I have often thought, that if the apostle Paul were to be envied for anything, it might be for the contented spirit which he had, after he got to be an old man. "I have learned," said he, "in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." What a precious lesson! I wish you would try to learn it, reader. You can learn it.

You ought to learn it. Set yourself about the task, then, at once.

Samuel Bissell was content with his factory life. It was not quite so pleasant as some others were. He could not help seeing that. But he did not spend his time or any part of his time in wishing he was somewhere else, doing some other kind of business. He did not say or sing, "There's a good time coming, boys." The good time *had come*, according to his notion. Still, he held on to that resolution—the resolution he formed when he got a glimpse of some of the wonders away off in the blue sky.

If you had watched him during the few leisure hours he had, you would have seen that he had not forgotten that old text of his, "I'll be somebody." Many and many a time, after he got home from the factory at night, he would go to his little room, and spend an hour or two reading and thinking. There was a small library in the village where he lived, and by paying a small sum every week, he was allowed to read some very valuable books. With what eagerness he picked up every kernel of knowledge he could find about the sun, and the planets, and the stars. When most of

the boys were playing in the streets, he was reading and studying in his chamber. While he was a factory boy, he learned from the books which fell into his hands, to dive a great deal deeper into the heart of many studies than he was taught to do in the school to which his father had sent him. He had become quite a master of the art of book-keeping; and as to geography and astronomy, I am not sure but he could have told some things about them which his former teacher never dreamed of.

CHAP. XII.

A GLANCE AT FREDERICK.

BEFORE I wind up my story, I have a good mind to go back, and tell you what became of that companion of our friend, the Peddler's Boy, who drank the glass of gin. Poor Frederick ! It makes my heart sad, to think what he might have been, and what he was. He was as kind, and amiable, and industrious, and prudent, as Samuel. His habits were as

good, too, for aught that I know, up to the time when he was so thoughtless and foolish as to yield to the wishes of that coarse and wicked boy. He had been as well brought up as Samuel. Good principles had been as carefully sown in his mind. There was, then, there could have been no general reason why he did not show himself more of a hero when he met his old schoolmate.

How foolish it was for Frederick to taste that liquor. He did not love gin. He disliked the taste of it. Moreover, he knew well enough that it was wrong to taste it, and I presume he saw clearly

enough, at the time, that he was making a little dunce of himself. Why did he not run away, if he could not resist temptation while he stayed there? Why, when Samuel reminded him, so kindly, that it was time for them to go, did he not go along about his business? How foolish it was for him to stay and drink that dram, which tasted to him, I dare say, almost as bad as a dose of salts? Oh, if he had only had more courage, more principle! But there he failed—and his failure cost him dearly!

Samuel, you will recollect, tried to console him, after he had drank the glass

of gin, to please Peter, by telling him that he was sure he would never do so again. But Samuel, it appeared afterwards, was too hopeful, too charitable. Frederick did drink again. How long it was after that holiday, before he did so, I don't know. Nor is it much matter. It is sufficient to know, that when a like temptation was placed before him again, he had less power to resist it than he had before. He drank again, and it was not many months before he liked dram-drinking as well as any of the boys in the factory.

However, Frederick had friends in the

city; and when he was about twenty-one years of age, some of these friends got him a good place as a clerk in a wholesale grocery store. He seemed to "turn over a new leaf," when he went to Boston to live. If he drank any—and I suppose he did a little—his habit did not grow much stronger, and he was a very faithful clerk.

After a year or two, he did so well, that his friends loaned him money, and he went into business for himself. For a year or two he did well, and was prosperous. His credit was good. His business increased. There was no rea-

son why he should not continue to prosper. None, did I say? There was one. His love for dram-drinking grew stronger, after a while, and he drank more and more. Not that he ever got absolutely drunk ; but it was not an uncommon thing for him to get *high*, as they sometimes say of the first stages of drunkenness—so high that he talked and acted very like a fool.

A habit of this kind is apt to grow upon a person. It grew upon Frederick. I will not trace his path, through all its windings, from tasting to moderate drinking, from moderate drinking to drunken-

ness, and from drunkenness to ruin. But such was his course. He drank till he entirely lost the power of controlling his appetite. His business affairs got out of order, and they became worse and worse. He failed. Not long after this, he was often seen reeling about the streets of Boston, a poor, miserable, drunken wretch.

One night, when he was drunk, some one who knew him, ordered a carriage, and took him to the neat little cottage which was the home of his childhood. His aged parents were already aware, to some extent, of Frederick's habits; but



THE DRUNKARD AND HIS FATHER.

when they saw there, before their eyes, that living wreck of what was once their son, it seemed as if their hearts would break with anguish. That night they said not a word to their son. They knew that he was not himself, and that anything he might say then, would only add to their grief.

The next day, however, after the reason of their miserable son had been partly restored, they had a long talk with him. He knew to what a depth he had fallen. But he declared, over and over again, that there was no hope for him. "I am lost!" said he; "I am

lost! Father," he continued, "I am drinking up my soul, and no power on earth can stop me. I could no more live without liquor, than a fish can live out of water. I am on fire, and nothing will help to quench the flames, but the liquor which feeds them."

Then he told the old man the story of that first glass of gin. "It was that," said he, "which has done all the mischief. If I had not played the fool then, I might have been somebody now. But I yielded to temptation. I formed the taste for liquor. It has grown upon me, until I am the loathsome beast that you

see before you. No, I never can stop drinking until I die.”

Poor, poor man! in less than three weeks after this interview with his parents, he died—died of that most terrible disease, the delirium tremens.

My young friends, before I leave this story of Frederick, let me urge you to beware of the first glass. I don't care whether it is gin, or rum, or brandy. Don't touch it. If you are tempted to drink, be a hero. Have courage to say “No, I'll not throw myself away. I think too much of myself for that.”

CHAP. XIII.

SAMUEL IN BOSTON.

TIME wore away. The peddler's boy, when he made up his mind to go to work in the factory, did not expect to spend his days there. He purposed to enter the factory because he thought that that was the best thing he could do *then*. You will recollect that he said to his father, when the old gentleman asked him what he would like to do, that there

were a great many things which he should *like* to do, and that may be he would do them some day ; but that as he could not do them *then*, he thought he would go to work in the factory, and wait until he could do them. Samuel, at length, began to think that it was time for him to look for some other business a little more to his mind than what he was doing then. So thought the good old peddler, his father. His mother—alas ! she had gone to her rest—her smiling face had long been missed in the little cottage where she had dwelt so many years. It was decided that Sam-

uel should go to Boston. But what was he to do there? That question gave others more anxiety than it gave Samuel. "I don't know, to be sure," said he, "exactly what I'll find to do. But I know I'll do *something*. I'll shovel dirt, if I can't get anything else to do, and I can make a living at that."

He went to Boston. The first thing he did, after he got there, was to walk straight to the house of Captain Love-child. The captain was at home, and glad to see him.

"Do you remember," the boy asked, "when you came to our house, a great

while ago, and brought your telescope with you?"

"Yes," the old man replied, "and I remember, too, how a certain little fellow got almost crazy when he looked through the instrument, at the moon and stars, and when I told him something about them."

"And do you remember *what* you said?"

"No, I'm sure I don't."

"Well, I do, as plainly as if you had said it but yesterday; and it was what you said about living to some purpose, and having a high aim, and being gov-

erned by high principles, that put a new soul into me.”

“And made you talk so largely?”

Samuel colored. “I was a foolish little creature, I suppose,” he said.

“No, not a bit of it,” said the captain, grasping the young man’s hand, “not a bit of it. I was glad to hear you say what you did. I’ve thought of it a thousand times since, and I have said to myself, ‘That chap will make something, if he lives, see if he don’t.’”

“Well, he *hasn’t* made anything yet.”

The captain laughed. “I don’t quite agree with you,” he said. “But, let

that be as it may, you are young yet, and the great pyramid and St. Peter's church were not built in a minute. Sam, what are you now?"

"A poor, green factory boy."

"Who is trying to do his duty, and sometimes asks God to help him; who is wide awake and ambitious; who has got a pretty good head and not a very bad heart; who will push his way in the world and be somebody?"

"I don't know about all that."

"Nor I, but I know some things about you—more than you dream of, I guess."

Samuel colored again, and tried to

stammer out something, but succeeded only tolerably well.

“You want something to do, don’t you?” the old man asked.

“Yes, sir,” said the peddler’s boy, “that is what I came to Boston for.”

“Well, let me think a moment,” said the good old gentleman. He did think a moment, and then he put on his hat, and got the gold-headed cane which he cut on the island of Malta, where Paul was cast away, and off he posted with his young friend. He knew what he was about. He had not been thinking for nothing. After walking some ten or

fifteen minutes, he went into a store on Commercial wharf, and asked one of the partners of the house, whom he seemed to know very well, if they did not want a clerk. The answer was that they did not need another clerk, but that they were very much in want of a good porter.

“Well,” here’s the chap,” said the captain, pointing to Samuel. “Sam, what do you say to that?”

Samuel was inclined to try the business, and in less than half an hour, the terms were arranged, and the young lad was at work.

CHAP. XIV.

THE FLOUR STORE.

THE men with whom Samuel had found a place, were large flour dealers. Their new porter pleased them. He, too, was pleased with his business. Nothing could be more pleasant for me now, than to relate to you scores of little incidents connected with Samuel's history, while he was in that store. But if I do that, I fear I shall spin out my thread so

long that you will get weary. I will tell you a few things, though.

It was Samuel's daily duty to sweep out the store. This task he performed early in the morning, before either of the partners or any of the clerks were at their posts. One morning, the first thing he saw, after opening the store, was a roll of bank bills, lying on the floor. He took it up, and unrolled it. There were some ten or twelve dollars in it. As soon as the book-keeper came to the store, Samuel handed him the roll of bank bills, and went about his work. That was a small matter, wasn't it?

But small as it was, those flour merchants, when they heard of it, noted it down in their memory.

Months passed. The book-keeper went into business for himself. A new book-keeper was needed to take his place. Samuel was talked of. "But can Samuel be depended upon?" it was asked. "Can we trust him? Is he faithful, and honest, and capable?" I don't know what decision they would have come to, if it had not been for the affair of the bank bills. But his honesty in that particular was brought up. They thought it would do to trust a young man

who could resist such a temptation as that. There was another thing they had heard about Samuel, which they thought pretty good evidence that he was honest. It was this: While Samuel was in the factory, he bought some articles at the village store. After he had paid for them, and got away a little distance, he found that the clerk had made a mistake in giving change, and that he had in his pocket fifty cents more than belonged to him. So he turned right around, went back to the store, and returned the money to the clerk.

“He’s the man,” they all said, as soon

as these facts were stated. So Samuel became the book-keeper in that large house, with a salary four times as large as he had received while he was the porter.

Some two or three years from the time he went to Boston to live, Samuel Bissell was one of the partners in that wealthy firm. He is by no means an old man now. Indeed, he is in the very prime of life. But he has got to be a rich man, and now owns one of the most beautiful country seats within a dozen miles of Boston, where he resides with his family. A great many merchants are so much en

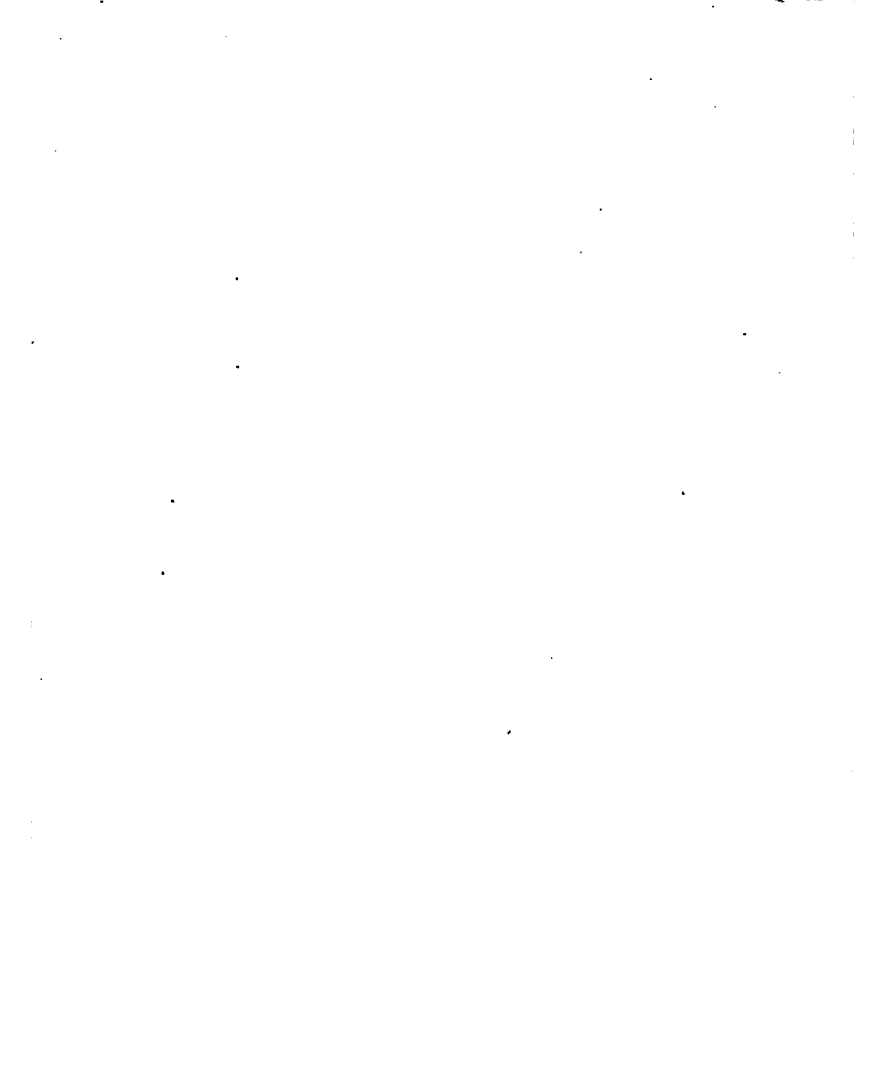
gaged in making money, that they seem to care hardly anything about improving the mind, and so they let that get all full of weeds. But Mr. Bissell did very differently. He spent a great part of the time which he could spare from his business, in gathering new sheaves of knowledge, and cultivating the garden of the heart.

I hardly know of a man for miles around, in that charming district of country, who is more respected and beloved than Samuel Bissell. When I saw him last, he had just been elected the second time to a seat in the legislature

of the State. I think he is a member of the Senate now.

I wish you could visit his place in the country, and see his fine garden and fine house. If you ever should happen that way, and should learn where he lives, you must not fail to make him a visit, and to tell him that Uncle Frank asked you to call. You will see there one of the happiest families that you ever came across in your life. Mr. Bissell sometimes amuses his children with stories about his boyhood, and they are perfectly delighted with these stories.

Don't forget to inquire for the good





MR. BISSELL AND HIS CHILDREN.

old peddler, as soon as you get into the house. “What ! is he living yet ?” To be sure he is, and Samuel has fitted up for him one of the pleasantest rooms in the whole house. His hair is very white, and he was very feeble when I saw him last. But his heart was as young as ever ; and he laughed, and played, and frolicked with his grandchildren just as merrily as if he had been a child himself.

Another thing I must tell you, while I think of it. There is a cupola on the top of Samuel’s house, and I want you should go into that, if you can get a chance. There you will see quite a

number of things which are worth seeing. One of them, perhaps, when you come to know what it is, will interest you more than all the rest. It is the very telescope which used to belong to Captain Lovechild, and which made Samuel's heart throb so, when he was a child—"put a new soul" into him, to use his own language. The old gentleman, some time since, left this world, I trust for a better and a happier one. Just before he died, he made a will, in which he remembered many of his friends, and Samuel, among the rest, to whom he gave the old telescope.

Mr. Bissell has more than once been heard to say, that he would not part with that telescope for a good farm.



CHAP. XV.

THE WINDING UP

IF I should undertake to tell my readers what lessons this story teaches, I am not sure but they would laugh at me. I fancy I see their bright eyes twinkle, as I begin to talk about these lessons, and I almost hear them say to one another, that Uncle Frank might as well carry a lantern in broad daylight, as to spend his time in telling us what this story

teaches. Some of them wonder, perhaps, if Uncle Frank really takes his readers for a set of little dunces.

Well, then, my shrewd little boy, what does the story teach ?

“ Why it teaches that the Peddler’s Boy set out to be somebody, and he was somebody.”

Very well. Anything else, little girl ? I must catechise you a little. What do you learn from it ?

“ That anybody can do anything he sets out to do, and that he can be anything he sets out to be.”

Bravo ! that is pretty well, only a

little too strong. And what else ? Why didn't Frederick get along in the world as well as Samuel ?

“Because he was a coward.”

I'm not sure but you are half right. It seems hard to call that poor, unfortunate youth a coward. But I do honestly think that he would have done well enough, if he had only scraped together a few more grains of courage. Look at that affair of the glass of gin. It was courage that he wanted there—courage to do right, no matter what his old play-mate might say or think. He was afraid to offend the boy. He had more fear of

the boy, it would appear, than he had of God. What that coarse, profane boy said, had more weight with him than the words which his conscience uttered. It was *principle*, after all, that he lacked. And so he was led away, and lost.

“Uncle Frank, I shall never forget what one glass will do.”

I hope you never will; and I hope you will remember, too, as long as you live, that the success of the Peddler's Boy was owing quite as much to his honesty, and temperance, and faithfulness, and religion—for he was a sin-

cere and devoted Christian—as to his ambition, and industry, and energy, and resolution.



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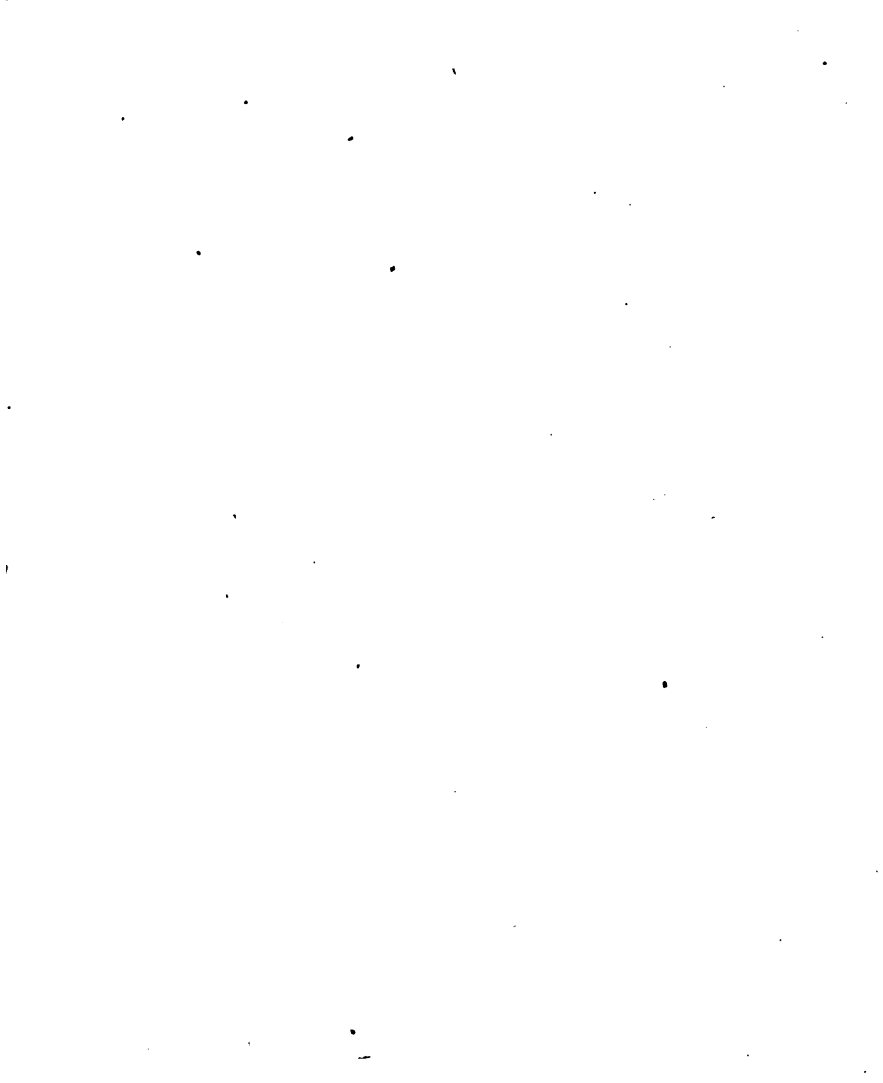
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